

## The Patron of Youth

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*Apostolic Encyclical of Pius XI., by Divine Providence, Pope, to His Beloved Son, Vladimir Ledochowski, General of the Society of Jesus, on the Centenary of the Canonization of Aloysius Gonzaga:*

**"BELOVED SON, HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION.**

"In the life of the Divine Master there stands out as a characteristic note a special predilection for youth. As He drew to Him and charmed innocent childhood, so with dreadful words He condemned with the gravest penalties those who should contaminate the little ones, and to unspotted youth He proposed the ideal fulfillment and perfection of sanctity. The Church has imbibed this same spirit from her Founder as heritage of His Divine Mission and work, and therefore from the very beginning of Christianity she has always shown this same affection of predilection for youth.

"Hence it follows that she has protected physical and moral integrity from infancy; for this reason she has opened schools, from the elementary to the university, that she may lead her children from their first studies to the highest discipline: for this reason the Religious Orders and Congregations have not only been approved by her, but have been promoted with this intention of providing for the right formation of youth through the foundation of universities, colleges, public schools and associations. And the Church has vindicated at all times her proper and inviolable right, making known to all human society entrusted to her, that she is the sole repository of genuine morals, that she alone is the infallible teacher of that most difficult art of forming in a Christian manner the true character of man.

"We, therefore, rejoice on the present occasion to see a very large band of youths of both sexes and of every social condition binding themselves to their priests and

pastors, all desirous of perfecting themselves in every point of the doctrine and practice of the Christian life, and of aiding the Church by their works in the mission that she must fulfill, the regeneration and salvation of souls.

#### A PACIFIC ARMY

"Thinking of the numerous bands of youth who, during the past Holy Year, came to Us from every section, We renew those happy emotions of joy which We then experienced in the thought that, with such youthful troops organized in all the nations, one day there shall be formed a strong pacific army that shall aid the Holy See in the reform of the world that is now being precipitated into decadence. Beyond this, the love which We cherish for youth still more profoundly recalls Our Heart to the spectacle of the many infernal snares that lie in wait for their faith and innocence, from which it too frequently happens that, in such a sharp spiritual struggle, the vigor of life and of virtue in so many youths, that otherwise would have been able to redound to the great good of the Church and society, is weakened.

"Especially does the Second Centenary of the Canonization of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, which occurs on the coming December 31st, carry great advantages for the spiritual profit of youth, and so, while We direct Our words to you, Beloved Son, We also direct Our thought to all Our youthful sons who, in every section of the world, represent the hopes of the reign of Jesus Christ. In fact, as the youth, in trial and in peril of life, ought to recur to this strong and potent Celestial Patron, so they ought to follow him who was such a marvelous model of every virtue. Those who study his life, will perceive clearly what are the paths of combat in order to attain perfection, what are the best means to follow in this regard, what precious fruits of virtue they may gather when they pursue the norms of Aloysius. And certainly, if they contemplate Gonzaga in his true light, and as he really is, even though the enemies of the Church and injudicious writers have deformed his image by their mendacious representations, shall they not find in him a singular model

of youthful virtue, even after the more recent examples of sanctity flourishing in the Church? Because, in going over ecclesiastical history it is easy to establish that those youths who have been most admirable for the innocence of their lives, are in great part modeled after his school. Among them, to cite a few examples, we are pleased to recall St. John Berchmans, an alumnus of the Roman College, who was another image of St. Aloysius: Nunzio Sulprizio, a young workman, who from childhood strove to imitate the Angel of Castiglione, persevering until death; Contardo Ferrini who justly was called by his contemporaries another St. Aloysius, and who nourished toward the Saint a most tender devotion, taking him as model of innocence; Bartolomea Capitanio, who in her life and death copied Gonzaga perfectly, who was singularly devoted to him, and who on this his centenary may be said to share his reward, participating in his glory by her elevation to the honors of the Blessed.

#### OTHER EXAMPLES

"Nor is it unjust to affirm that our Saint entered in no small way into the interior change and sanctification of Gabriel Addolorata who, although in youth showed himself to be fond of ease and of wasting his time, never interrupted his devotion to Gonzaga, whom he had learned to venerate as the Patron of Youth. And, to cite one among the many more recent educators and teachers of youth, Don Giovanni Bosco not only was tenderly devoted to St. Aloysius, but left this devotion as a heritage to his sons, and imprinted in lively manner this image upon the children whom he taught; and among them there rises pre-eminently that imitator of St. Aloysius, the most pure soul of Domenico Savio who, although brief the time God gave him, remains the admiration of men upon earth. Certainly it seems that not without a mysterious dispensation of Divine Providence our Aloysius was taken away by an early death, when he was scarcely in the flower of his age, and when his singular gifts of mind and heart, his firm and ready will, his singular prudence, almost seeming to be divine, and one with these, his zeal for religion and for souls, gave promise of fruits of a most fervid apostolate.

"And so God wished that the young might learn from this holy youth through whom the flower of a common life has become amiable and imitable, the particular and exact duties of their state, in order to prepare themselves for the duties of life, educating themselves solidly and perfecting themselves in Christian virtue. Those indeed who do not furnish themselves with the accoutrement of those interior virtues of which St. Aloysius gave such a splendid example, will not be able to arm themselves against the perils and struggles of life, nor will they be capable of exercising the apostolate, but they will be like to 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbals,' and they will even prove an injury to that cause for which they wish to fight and which they desire to defend, as has happened—all know it—many times.

"Who does not see how opportunely the centenary commemoration of Gonzaga falls in our times, for in the example of his own life he proposes to youth the means of girding themselves in the camp of Catholic action, but first of all he teaches them how they should work for the perfection of their interior life.

#### LIVING FAITH

"Above all, Gonzaga shows to the youth that the strength of the Christian education has as its foundation the spirit of a living faith, by which men appear as a light that shines in a dark place (St. Peter ii. 19), knowing fully the nature and importance of mortal life. Because St. Aloysius did not dispose his life according to the norms of temporal things, but of eternal—without which one cannot be a spiritual man,—he was accustomed to consider and to meditate at length and profoundly in the solitude of the Spiritual Exercises, from which, being accustomed to use them from childhood, and afterward in the Society of Jesus, he gathered such great fruits for his soul. Truly, We think it absolutely necessary that our youth, after the example of Gonzaga, should imprint well in their souls this truth, so that human life should not be taken up with the seeking for the enjoyment of frail goods by which the talents and the senses of youth are too often dragged down, but on the contrary, they ought to esteem a career in which, by

serving Christ alone, they may hasten toward their eternal country. This just concept of life our youths should strive to attain, and, after the example of their Celestial Patron, retiring from the tumult of human things, they should apply themselves for a determined length of time to the Spiritual Exercises, which, as long experience shows, are most efficacious for establishing and rendering the souls of youth pliant and docile.

"Aloysius, as We have said, enlightened with the light of eternal truth, having made his determination not to omit anything that might preserve him in innocence of life, proved so constant in this determination that from his first use of reason to his last breath he was preserved free from the stain of every grave sin, and in particular he held the flower of his purity jealously guarded from the slightest spot, meriting to be called by his companions the Angel, that same name by which he has come to be called by the Christian people—so that the Blessed Robert Bellarmine, who was the Director of the holy Youth, held him to be confirmed in grace. St. Aloysius, therefore, had attained the perfection and fullness of virtue because, thanks to an extraordinary favor of God, he was exempt from that interior and exterior warfare whereby we battle against our nature, fallen from original justice.

#### SPIRIT OF PRAYER

"Indeed, by a singular privilege, he was never disturbed by sensual incitements, although, high spirited as he was, he was not wholly free from the struggle against anger, solicitude and vainglory. Not only did he reign in the propensions of nature with indomitable will, but in everything he held all in submission to the rule of reason. And, as was not ignorant of the inherent weakness of human nature, he never trusted in himself, but sought to procure the help of Divine grace, praying for many consecutive hours at night, asking the Divine clemency and the patronage of the Virgin Mother of God, to whom he was most tenderly devoted of all. And in particular, knowing well that in the Most Holy Eucharist was the sustenance of the spiritual life, he was accustomed to approach the Holy Table whenever he was

permitted to do so, in order to draw fresh strength and forces, and since Divine grace may never be disjoined from human co-operation, our Saint, in order to guard unsullied the innocence of his life and the purity of his manners, to the most fervent cult of the Most Holy Sacrament and of the Mother of God united flight from worldly things, and a castigation of his senses that other men, for the greater part, can admire, but not equal. And it is a wonderful and almost incredible thing that, amid such great depravity of customs, Gonzaga, by the whiteness of his soul, rivaled the celestial spirits; in the midst of such grievous search after pleasures, the holy youth was signalized by a singular abstemiousness and for austerity and hardness of life; in the midst of such eager desire for honors. Aloysius prized only that which was his heritage, and with a willing heart abdicated that princely title which was his by right and asked to be included in that religious family from which by special vow the gaining of any dignity is precluded, even though it be of a sacred order: Finally, in the midst of such careful cultivation of the ancient Greek and Roman culture, Aloysius was so assiduous in the study and practice of celestial things that by a particular gift of God and through his own singular industry he lived with his soul turned wholly to God, and suffered no distraction in his contemplation.

#### MOST BEAUTIFUL VIRTUES

"These, certainly, are heights of sanctity that are extraordinary, and, We would say, inaccessible even to men of consummate virtue, but they should serve to admonish our youth so that they may understand what industry they should exercise in striving for the attainment of the most beautiful virtues of youth: innocence and honesty of custom. And in this regard, We are not unaware that certain educators of youth, alarmed by the everyday depravity of customs by which so many youths are precipitated into ruin with incredible loss to their souls—in order to keep at a distance from civil society such grave loss and extermination, are already to invent new systems of education. But We would wish them to understand well that such research will result to no ad-

vantage to the public good, when they obscure those arts and disciplines that, drawn from the fountains of Christian wisdom and proved by the usage of many centuries, Aloysius experimented with in himself so efficaciously; a living faith We say, flight from seductions, the government and restraint of the soul, an active devotion toward God and the Most Blessed Virgin, a life frequently comforted and invigorated by the Celestial Banquet.

"If the youth will look attentively upon Gonzaga as the perfect model of chastity and of holiness, they will not only learn to keep sensuality in check, but still more, they will avoid the stumbling into which they fall when, having imbibed the doctrine of a certain knowledge which disprizes the doctrine of Christ and of His Church, they suffer themselves to turn aside by an intemperate eagerness for liberty, by pride of the intellect and independence of the will.

"Aloysius, on the contrary, although knowing himself heir to a princely heritage, left it to conform with docility to those who were masters in the art of studies and piety, and later, become a religious of the Society of Jesus, he conformed with such perfection to the orders and counsels of his superiors as never to depart, even in the slightest matter, from the prescriptions of his Institute.

#### YOKE OF DISCIPLINE

"To none will this exact comportment appear more severe than to those youths who deceived by a certain appearance of good, and unwilling to bear any check, will not listen to the admonitions of their elders. Especially those who wish to fight beneath the banners of Christ ought to hold firmly that, when they desire to shake off the yoke of discipline, in place of gathering triumph, they will meet with ignoble downfall, since nature itself by Divine disposition, attests that youth cannot make any true profit either in the intellectual and moral life or in the proper formation of conduct to the Christian spirit, unless under the discipline of others. And as in all the rest, so in the field of Catholic action and of the apostolate a great docility is required. Those offices entrusted by Christ to the Church cannot be exer-

cised fruitfully unless they are joined with a loving dependence on those whom the Holy Spirit has placed to rule the Church of God.

### RUINOUS PRIDE

"As formerly, in the terrestrial Paradise, Satan, making grand and incredible promises as a premium for disobedience to our First Parents, led them to rebel against God, so in our day, under the pretext of liberty, he seduces and draws into ruin so many youths, inflated with empty pride, although their dignity rests in the respect due to legitimate authority. On the contrary, while Aloysius, by his distinctive prudence, was surrounded by very great admiration among his associates, who founded on his future principality the most joyful hopes, and by his brethren in religion who already indicated him as the future General of the Order, he cherished a lowly esteem of himself and was obedient to all those who in his regard took the place of His Eternal Lord and King, with a most humble, and at the same time a most dignified submission.

"From a conduct of life so holy and illuminated by the light and the precepts of the Faith, Aloysius gathered the most sweet and precious fruits. In him the gifts of nature and of grace were united in perfect harmony to represent an exemplary model for youth. Is it not true that he, by reason of the excellence of his genius as well as by the maturity of his judgment, by the nobility and force of his sentiments as well as by the sweetness and suavity of his behavior, appears to use an ideal model? So, by the elevation and perspicacity of his intelligence, free from the fogs that arise from unhealthy passions, he assiduously dedicated himself to contemplation and to the operation of truth and of right testimony as we see in course of study so splendidly completed by him and the philosophical disputations published with universal approval and sustained applause, and finally the writings which he has left, especially the letters which, although not many, notwithstanding his youthful age, win admiration for a wisdom of knowledge and discernment of things.

"Of his right judgment and very fine discernment he



gave proof in the most difficult things entrusted to him by his father and which he treated with prudence and conducted to a happy ending; among others in that incident when, after the death of his father, he reconciled his own brother with the Duke of Mantua, dissuading them from plots and rancors. Of his noble heart and the amiability of his conduct all those who had dealings with him in common life as in his period of rule, give unanimous and ample praise, his fellow citizens and domestics, princes and courtiers, and above all, his Superiors and brothers of the Society, where all held him in general admiration. We know how, in special manner, firmness of character and constancy were revealed in his determinations.

#### A STRONG DETERMINATION

"From his most tender years, the little heir of the Marchese of Castiglione, having taken the determination to become holy, remained faithful until death to such a proposition, strongly conceived. The spiritual ascension, begun with him from the time he attained the use of reason, knew afterward neither suspension nor regress. Can We give an example more opportune or more adapted to our needs than this model of imitation, especially to studious youth? For youth has not only need of enriching the mind and heart with a sane and solid culture, but also of possessing a judgment sound, serene, and well-balanced, in order to judge and to feel rightly regarding men and events, without permitting themselves to be drawn away by false illusions or by violent and enervating passions or by public opinion; they should be signalized by sweetness and suavity of soul, in order to maintain and promote a spirit of concord in the bosoms of families and of civil society, and by firmness and constancy of will to be able to direct themselves and others in good.

"In Aloysius there was not lacking a wonderful industry and diligence for the advantage of his neighbor. While the contemplation of heavenly things and the familiar conversation with God was his principal and most assiduous occupation, his life, he could well say, was hidden with Christ in God: from his heart burst forth

sparks of apostolic ardor, that in certain manner announced the flames of the fire that were to follow it. So, scarcely emerged from childhood, we see him edifying by his example and holy conversations all those who had any relations with him, inflaming them at an opportune time toward virtue, and with his advance in years, behold him attracted from that simple ideal, aspiring to more high and arduous undertakings for the salvation of souls and desiring to give himself to the apostolic missions among the heretics and pagans.

#### ALOYSIUS IN ROME

"So Rome admired Aloysius as a student of the Roman College as he went along the piazzas and the streets, the haunts of the city, teaching the elements of Christian doctrine to the children and the poor. It was evidence of his heroic charity that he went where pest was raging and dedicated himself to the service of the cholera victims contracting the germs of the disease which, when he was scarcely twenty-four years of age, brought him to the tomb.

"These are precisely the fields of action that are largely opened to our youth who wish to follow the example of Aloysius, in order that they may imitate him and follow his edifying example in the efficacy of good discourses, the love and desire for the sacred Missions, the teaching of Christian doctrine and finally the works of charity in varied form. It would be well for the great phalanx of Catholic youth to dedicate themselves to this, because the form of the Aloysian apostolate, reflowering, is opportunely adapted to present needs. The Aloysian apostolate, We say, because, far from ending with the death of Aloysius, it continues in still more salutary manner from Heaven.

"From the blessed seat of the Elect where, in ecstatic vision, the Carmelite Virgin, Maddelena De Pazzi, contemplated him ruling in glory or where, two centuries ago, Our Predecessor, Benedict XIII., of happy memory, inscribed him with solemn decree among the Saints, Aloysius has never ceased to send down copious benefits on his devoted clients of every rank, but particularly upon the youth. Hence it is that there are so many sodalists

banded together under his name and honoring his patronage; that the youths of both sexes who, following his example, weave the thorns of mortification amid the lilies of purity are so innumerable. And so, between Aloysius and the Christian youth there seems to be a rivalry, he in being prodigal of his gifts, they in honoring him as Celestial Patron. What wonder, then, that the Roman Pontiffs have chosen Aloysius as Model and Protector of youth?

### PERILS OF TIMES

"We, likewise, moved by that lively solicitude that We more than all feel regarding the perfect education and salvation of youth, especially in times like ours, when they are exposed to grave perils as well in recognition for benefits already obtained, as to ensure through Aloysius benefits still more copious, insisting on the norms of Our Predecessors, in particular of Benedict XIII. and Leo XIII., solemnly confirm and with Our apostolic authority declare St. Aloysius Gonzaga Celestial Patron of all the Christian youth. And while We entrust this most elect branch of the Catholic family to the care and custody of Aloysius, to the end that they may prosper and become always more vigorous and exemplary in the open and prompt profession of the Catholic Faith and in the purity of customs, We exhort them ardently, and with paternal affection conjure them, to hold Aloysius always present as their model, and never to cease from venerating him and invoking him, especially through those devout exercises, such as the pious practice of the Six Sundays, which long experience has demonstrated to be so fecund of many great fruits.

"With great comfort We learn that the Committee assigned to the solemn centenary festivities under the vigilant direction of Our Cardinal Vicar, has suggested to the youth that they spend some time in spiritual retreat, binding themselves by pact to lead a life Christianly honest and pure, inscribing their names with their own hand, and confirming these promises as if with oath in proper bands, which, afterward collected and bound in volumes will be brought here by delegates of the youth of the entire Catholic world, and, having been ratified

by the Supreme Pontiff, will be deposited as a pledge of piety and remembrance in the temple where the bones of Aloysius repose. We could not imagine anything more suited to enkindle the fervor of generous youth; hence it is that the celebration of this jubilee feast will renovate the spirit of the youth of the entire world and will certainly not be lacking in effect.

"All those who, forming a part of the immense family of Catholic youth, and who shall come to this Kind City at the time fixed for the festivities, will be received by Us and welcomed from Our Heart, as security of things truly great and profitable, and they will be accompanied in Our Mind and heart to the tomb of Aloysius with the wish that Ours may experience ever more efficaciously the care of such a Celestial Patron.

"As, on the same day, St. Stanislaus Kostka was joined to Aloysius and written among the Saints, he who, a few years before, had flown to Heaven from the Company of Jesus, it is fitting that Our youth, on this happy recurrence, would turn their eyes toward the seraphic little Polish youth to whom the Savior, by one of the prodigies of His wisdom, granted 'the grace of attaining in still tender years a mature sanctity.'

"He likewise was an offshoot of a noble family, he likewise was a strong and generous soul, a flower of angelic purity, and desirous of the most sublime ideals; he had for a long time struggled with a brother given to a worldly and careless life; he overcame the snares of an heretical family and dissipated companions, and afterward, consoled and strengthened by the Eucharistic Bread, was ministered to not once, but many times by angelic hands, undertook long journeys on foot to follow the voice of God that called him to most noble undertakings, and of the Blessed Virgin, who bade him enter the Society of Jesus. He came here to Rome, but only to ascend shortly after to the Eternal Jerusalem; this youth dear among the holy Confessors, was consumed at the age of eighteen years by the fire of charity. And it would seem that God had wished to crown in special manner the strength and constancy of Stanislaus attributing to this most innocent youth such splendor of glory and offering him a Mediator as an impregnable defense to his countrymen and to all Christianity against

the most formidable perils, especially the incursions of the Turks. His intercession, marvelous as it was in so many fierce perils of his country, was evident to all, so that the great Christian Cæsar, Giovanni Sobieski, the liberator of Vienna from a terrible siege, did not hesitate to declare that his victories were due, not so much to his arms, as to the protection of Stanislaus.

"May God grant that through the supplication of both these Saints, joined together there may be granted to Our youth the grace of emulating them, of aspiring with greater ardor and advancing more rapidly to the conquest of that sole Christian grandeur that is the most beautiful ornament of purity and sanctity.

"As auspice of celestial gifts and pledge of Our paternal affection to you, Beloved Son, to all the Religious of the Society of Jesus, and to your students, We impart with full heart the Apostolic Benediction.

"Given at Rome, St. Peter's, June 13, 1926, the Fifth Year of Our Pontificate."

## The Catholic Boy

REV. IGNATIUS COX, S.J.

*A sermon delivered to the Catholic Boys' organizations of New York  
at the annual vesper service in St. Patrick's Cathedral,  
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THERE is a scene in the gospels, which every Catholic boy ought to know. It was the springtime of the year. All nature was awaking to a renewed life, and the Jews were celebrating their memorial day, the Pasch, to commemorate their escape from the slavery of Egypt. A vast throng of five thousand men not including women and children had hiked out to the vast open spaces bordering the sea of Galilee. Here they found Jesus of Nazareth, the wonder-worker. They had followed Him into the mountains drawn by the beauty of His face and the charm of His presence. He, the Divine Magnet had attracted them to Himself; for He was about to perform a great miracle, the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. This was to be a sign of the multiplication of the Eucharistic Bread, which makes every day for the Catholic a memorial day of Christ. One of the heroes of this great day was the boy who had five barley loaves and two fishes.

All day long the people had listened to the music of Christ's voice, and as they brought their sick and ailing to the Master, He with gentlest touch gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, strength to the weak. When evening was come and the swift shadows were about to fall, the Apostles asked Jesus to send away the people, because they were without food in the desert. But Jesus answered: "They have no need to go, give them to eat." "How many loaves have you?" And Andrew, the brother of Simon, turning saw the boy hero standing by and he said to the Lord: "There is a boy here who hath five barley loaves and two fishes." Then Christ took the loaves and fishes from the boy and blessed and multiplied them and worked on that beau-

tiful spring day one of His greatest miracles, feeding the thousands in the desert with the gift of the boy. And when the people saw this they tried to make Him king.

To me this boy stands forth as a model for every Catholic boy organization. He practised what should be the slogan of every Catholic boy. He served Jesus Christ and through the service of Christ, served His fellow men. He gave the loaves and fishes to the Master and Christ in blessing the loaves and fishes blessed the boy and worked His miracle of love for the hungry thousands in the desert.

It was no accident that the lad was there. It seems to me that He must have often stood in the throng and listened to the words of the Master, and when he knew that the Master was going into the desert he brought his loaves and fishes for the Master's use.

You, too, if you are worthy of your outfits must make Christ your king and leader, and have as your battle cry, Service of Christ and Service of your fellow man. You must know Christ, as the boy in the Gospel, follow Christ, imitate Him and give Him your service. To do this well, you must know Christ, the Boy, the finest, truest, noblest lad that ever lived. His boy friends of Nazareth, knew Him. They knew that He was swift of foot, quick of limb, and courageous of heart and strong of will. He loved nature and the wide open spaces. He always loved the solitudes, the mountain tops and the silent plains. He knew the flowers and their ways, the fishes and their tricks, the birds of the air and their hidden haunts. His sermons in later life were filled with stories of flowers, of birds, of trees. He loved all the things of nature because he saw in them the handiwork of His Heavenly Father. The storms spoke of His power, the fruits of His goodness, and the star strewn sky of His undying glory.

And because the boy Jesus saw in the things of nature His heavenly Father, He also saw Him in His fellow men, in His companions and His superiors. With His companions He was always a ray of sunshine and His presence always brought joy. There was a benediction in His handshake and an absolution in His smile. He was gentle with the weak and Master of the strong, the ideal boy leader. His presence never restrained boy-

ish good spirits but it did keep back all wicked deeds. As the lily sends forth its sweet perfume so the boy Jesus radiated purity. All His companions felt better and holier for His presence. He was so brave, so strong, so big hearted, so gentle.

Towards His elders the Boy Jesus was reverent and helpful and he did His daily good deed with joy in His heart. The only thing we know of eighteen years of His life was that "He went down to Nazareth and was subject to them," *i. e.*, to His blessed Mother and St. Joseph. Thus He, the God-Man taught all boys the lesson of the nobility of obedience to parents and lawful authority. Obedience to Him was not only a duty, it was also a joy, because in all His superiors he saw the authority of His Heavenly Father. His love of nature, His love of companions, His love of obedience to Mary and Joseph, were His way of expressing the love of the Heavenly Father which burned in His Sacred Heart. His first recorded words are these, "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business? And the Father's business is summed up in these two expressions, love of God, and love of the neighbor. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." And because Jesus, the Boy, loved God and loved His neighbor, He also loved His native land and His people with a passionate love. He wept over Jerusalem when He foresaw its destruction. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered you under My wing, as the hen does her chicks, but thou wouldst not." And all the time Jesus by self-sacrifice was preparing Himself for the great day when He would die and offer up the supreme sacrifice for His people and all the world.

And so the boy in the Gospel with the five loaves and two fishes had doubtless learned the lesson from the life of the Master. For He served Jesus Christ, His God, and He served His neighbor. And you if you are to be worthy members of your organizations and worthy Catholic boys must learn the lesson too.

You must love the service of Christ and the uniform of Christ. You have a privilege that no other save the Catholic boy has, to be near Christ and to become absorbed in Christ. The multiplication of the loaves



supplied by the boy in the Gospel was only a symbol of the multiplication of the Eucharistic bread. You can be as near Christ as the boy in the Gospel. You can as altar boys present the bread that is to become the Body of Christ. Yes! you can be nearer, you can receive Jesus Christ into your very souls and Jesus Christ will become the food of your souls and your bodies alike. Christ's Body part and parcel of your body, Christ's Blood pulsating with your blood, Christ's Heart beating with your heart, Christ's mind illuminating your mind, your will strengthened by Christ's will! By union with Christ you can gain from Him a love of nature in all her moods. You may learn from Him to love the flowers and the plains and the meadow-lands and mountain tops. *Union* with Christ will never make you less a boy, it will always make you more a man.

It will make you strong of heart in moments of danger. It will make you brave and fearless in the presence of evil companions. It will make you as clean as the skies and the winds and the ocean's surf; clean in body, clean in heart, clean in soul, loving the clean things of life, clean companions, clean books, clean plays and clean amusements.

You have heard a great deal about the Notre Dame football team and its long string of victories, you have heard less about the fact that the Catholic boys on the team were daily communicants. They were brave in play, courageous in attack, and calm in defeat, because they learned these things from Jesus Christ, their king and captain.

Union with Jesus Christ, following Jesus Christ the leader will make you loving children of Mary, reverent towards old age, obedient to all lawful authority, your parents, your teachers, your country. Union with Jesus Christ will make you true patriots. You will love this fair and beauteous land of ours with its high topping mountains, its broad streams, its fertile valleys, its teeming coasts. You will love your country above all as the land of liberty and fair play, and you will remember that Jesus Christ, your leader, told you "To render to Cæsar" your country, "the things that are Cæsar's" and to God the things that are God's."

Memorial day should be celebrated not only for those

who have died for their country, but also for those who have lived for their country. You can do every thing for your country by modelling your lives on the boy in the Gospel, taking as your slogan, service of Christ and service of your neighbor. No one can truly love his country who does not love and serve God.

If you are true to your organizations, if you are like the boy in the Gospel, if you serve Christ, and serve your neighbor, then you are the hope of the Catholic Church in America. By the bright sunshine of the love in your lives you will confound the dark lies of those false Americans, who have taken for their battle cry a slogan of hate. By your service of Christ and your service of your neighbor you will give the best answer to one of the most pernicious lies ever circulated that a good Catholic cannot be a good American. But to do this you must be brave, you must learn to endure and suffer. In all the sacrifices Christ, the Boy, made, He was preparing for the day of supreme sacrifice when He was to lay down His life for His people and the whole world. The service of Christ, the service of your neighbors means self-sacrifice and self-conquest. You have been reading about the conquest of the north by Commander Byrd and you must have read how he first had to conquer himself, and harden himself against the cold by going whole winters without a coat. You too, must learn to harden yourselves for Christ, not your bodies only, but your souls. So that when the polar winds of temptations blow, as blow they will, you will prefer Christ's service to self-service and conquer sin in your lives.

When Jesus Christ accepted the loaves and the fishes and multiplied them miraculously, He seems to me to have blessed the boy and made Him a model for all Catholic boys who should make the service of Christ and service of the neighbor a life slogan. Indeed the loaves and fishes became a slogan and a sign of the Eucharist itself and every day we assist at the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass, we are keeping a memorial day for Christ.

It was another boy, a Roman, St. Tarcisius who died a martyr of Christ, defending the Eucharistic Bread from the Roman rabble. It was a Polish boy St. Stanislaus,

who was fed by the angels with the Eucharistic Bread because he stood true to Christ.

And so from the boy in the Gospel with the loaves and fishes symbolic of the Eucharist, through all the Christian boy heroes we could show how their lives have always been near Christ in the Eucharist until we come to the last boy hero, John de Lalande, who was beatified by His Holiness last June. *And he was an American boy and a member of your own State.*

Not that he was born in America, but that he died for America. For he shed his blood for Christ to make America Catholic here in our own New York State at the hands of the savage Iroquois Indians. He was New York's first altar boy, and as you see his picture in trapper's clothing you would call him the "first member of New York's Boy Scouts and boys' brigade, and boys' clubs." He was companion of another martyr, the priest Isaac Jogues. When all others fled, he stood fast to the priest of Jesus Christ to serve at the bloody altar of martyrdom, if he could not offer the loaves for the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass. He was captured at Lake George, then named the Lake of the Blessed Sacrament. He was martyred forty miles west of Albany in a mountain solitude, and he ran the gauntlet for Christ. Indian tomahawks, gleaming knives, the slow burning torture fires could not make him flinch or yield to the enemies of Christ.

He is a pioneer of and model for your organizations. You, too, must run the gauntlet for Christ. The Iroquois are dead, a new Iroquois have taken their places, the enemies of the cross and doctrine of Jesus Christ. They are tempting you and will tempt you from the service of Christ. Tempt you to serve your body, serve yourself, serve everyone and everything save Christ. Tempt you to give your loaves and fishes, your senses and your intellect and will to the service of the world and not to Christ. Tempt you by unclean books, unclean pictures, and unclean amusements. Tempt you by laughing at prayer, the Sacraments, and Holy Mother the Church. Tempt you by throwing scorn on religion and obedience and self-sacrifice.

You Catholic boys must run the gauntlet for Christ, and in the running remember the boy in the Gospel who

gave the loaves and the fishes and served Christ not himself! In the midst of these modern Iroquois remember the boys Tarcisius and Stanislaus and run the gauntlet for Christ! When the war cry is uttered against your Faith, remember the boy John de Lalande and how he ran the gauntlet for Christ. Remember also the Boy Jesus, who hardened Himself against the day of Calvary and fear not. Run the gauntlet for Christ!